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31 May 1966

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Dear

1. I have given a lot of thought to the conversations we had in California and also to the relative role your proposal might play in my over-all plans. Several key considerations have floated forward in my mind:

a. The relationship of a sub-optimization problem, and its results to the over-all optimization. What meaning could one attach to sensitivity curves derived from a sub-optimization; should one not in fact relate these to the whole problem? And does not this imply that credibility varies directly with the broadness of the problem to which optimizing is applied? Specifically, could one rely on the results of a simple end play duel? I frankly don't have more than an intuitive feeling, and while answers to these questions could be obtained, to do so would involve inserting the sub-optimization into the larger optimizing mechanism.

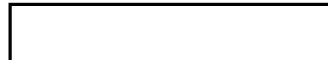
b. Recognizing the impossibility of achieving a mechanism which optimizes the over-all international confrontation, in peace, in cold war, and in wars of all magnitude, what is a rational breakdown into manageable sub-optimization areas? I believe that, for example, ground combat and thermonuclear exchange can be examined separately, but I am not so sure that within thermonuclear exchange valid sub-optimizations are available.

c. The approach we discussed and which you have very ably described in your proposal still seems useful to me, but I feel that its application might well have more immediate acceptability and impact if it were handled directly with DOD rather than being brokered through CIA. Though you and I are well aware of my objectivity, others may have doubts which could interfere, if only in a bureaucratic way, with the prompt impact.

2. In view of the above, I propose to you the following. With your permission, I will talk with General Sy Betts, head of Army R&D and give your proposal to him. I would frankly tell him that it appears to me to have considerable merit and should be pursued, but that, in my view, its impact could be maximized under Army sponsorship. If you concur with this, please call me so that early actions can occur.

Sincerely,

151



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